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Letter dated 22 May 2014 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith China's position paper regarding the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam's illegal disruption of the normal drilling operation by a Chinese company in the waters off China's Xisha Islands (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 76 (a).

(*Signed*) **Wang** Min
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Acting Permanent Representative
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Annex to the letter dated 22 May 2014 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Position paper

1. On 2 May 2014, shortly after a Chinese company's HYSY 981 drilling rig started an oil and gas drilling operation in the waters close to China's Xisha Islands, Viet Nam attempted to disrupt the drilling operation by sending vessels to deliberately and forcefully ram into Chinese Coast Guard vessels that were on the site for escort and security missions. After the incident, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China sent a note to the Vietnamese Embassy in China, asking the latter to notify its capital of a prior navigation notice issued by China's maritime authorities and urging Viet Nam to follow international practices by taking note of and respecting this notice so as to maintain proper order for maritime production activities and navigation safety. Nevertheless, the number of Vietnamese vessels only increased, and collisions against Chinese vessels on the site became fiercer. Figures collected as at 22 May indicated that, at one point, as many as 63 Vietnamese vessels of various types were at the scene, including many armed vessels, and that there were 745 collisions against Chinese government vessels. While such collisions were taking place, Viet Nam also dispatched frogmen and other underwater agents and laid large obstacles, including fishing nets and floating objects, in the waters. Furthermore, Viet Nam has been making unfounded comments to other countries, slandering and attacking China on this matter. Meanwhile, some outlaws in Viet Nam took the opportunity to attack Chinese companies in the country and committed serious violent crimes of beating, smashing, looting and burning, causing heavy casualties and property loss.

2. The Xisha Islands are an integral part of China's territory and are under China's effective jurisdiction. There exists no dispute over the Xisha Islands. The area where the HYSY 981 rig operates is 17 nautical miles from Zhongjian Island of the Xisha Islands and nearly 150 nautical miles from the coast of Viet Nam. The relevant operation falls well within China's sovereignty and jurisdiction. As a matter of fact, the Chinese company has for years conducted oil and gas activities in the related waters, including two-dimensional and three-dimensional seismic operations. The drilling operation carried out this time is simply a continuation of the routine oil and gas activities. China is deeply shocked by Viet Nam's violent disruption of the normal operation of the Chinese company and is firmly opposed to such acts by Viet Nam.

3. Viet Nam's violent disruption of the normal operation of the Chinese company constitutes a gross violation of China's sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction. It endangers the normal order of production and operation at sea, threatens the safety of the Chinese rig, ships, facilities and personnel, and negatively affects peace and stability in the region as well as safety of navigation in the relevant waters. China has, through diplomatic channels, repeatedly urged Viet Nam to respect China's sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction, immediately cease the disruption in whatever form and withdraw Vietnamese ships from the operation site. Since Viet Nam has refused to heed China's advice and continued to disrupt the relevant operation, China has no choice but to step up safety and security on the site and take necessary measures in reaction to the ramming and harassing activities of

Viet Nam. China urges Viet Nam to immediately cease all actions violating China's sovereignty and undermining proper order at sea, and take resolute and effective measures to stop all violent crimes, bring those accountable to justice and ensure the safety of Chinese citizens and institutions in Viet Nam.

4. China has maintained contact with Viet Nam since the incident took place, and the two countries have had smooth channels of communication. The current situation is caused completely by Viet Nam's illegal disruption of the normal operation by the Chinese company. Despite all this, China has kept in mind the larger interests of bilateral relations and peace and stability in the South China Sea, and will maintain communication with Viet Nam.